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RR RUEHDT RUEHLMC  
DE RUEHUM #0219/01 1351032  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 141032Z MAY 08 ZDK  
FM AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2156  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6156  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3031  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2248  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3356  
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 1754  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0281  
RUEHDT/AMEMBASSY DILI 0009  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0623  
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 0266  
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0253  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0184  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC  
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ULAANBAATAR 000219

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/CM, DRL AND IO  
USAID FOR ANE FOR D. WINSTON

E.O 12958: N/A

TAGS: KDEM PGOV PREL PHUM SOCI MG

SUBJECT: MONGOLIA'S ACTIVE CAMPAIGN SEASON OPENS "OFFICIALLY";  
TRAINING UNDERWAY FOR DOMESTIC ELECTION OBSERVERS

REF: (A) ULAANBAATAR 217; (B) STATE 50320

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION

**¶1.** (SBU) SUMMARY: The campaign season formally opened on May 14 for Mongolia's Parliamentary elections, and the independent General Election Commission (GEC) confirmed that the elections would be held on June 29. Up for grabs are all 76 seats in Parliament; a close contest is expected between the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) and the opposition Democratic Party (DP).

Training of election observers by the Mongolia office of the International Republican Institute (IRI) has already begun. IRI Mongolia is holding 19 day-long training sessions for domestic election observers across the country. At a training session attended by Post on May 9, observers affiliated with the DP were briefed about the polling process, methods for identifying and preventing fraud, and how to file a complaint with GEC authorities. IRI Mongolia's Director predicted that Mongolia's move from single-member electoral districts to multiple-member districts would favor incumbents. END SUMMARY.

**¶2.** (SBU) Campaigning for Mongolia's June 29 Parliamentary elections officially kicked off on May 14, but most candidates have been active in their districts for the past month on "familiarization trips." (Note: During the Charge's swing through three western provinces, candidates were busy plying voters with free pop concerts and wrestling matches to help spread their name.) IRI Mongolia has already been holding training sessions for election observers for more than a week. The training is aimed at members of the MPRP and DP. (Note: In accordance with Mongolian law, only partisan election observers are allowed, although foreign election observers do not face this requirement. End Note.) A May 9 session, led by a judge and an attorney, focused on the rights and responsibilities of observers; the polling process; recognition and prevention of fraud; the vote-counting process; and the complaint process. The training included lectures, group work and the viewing of a documentary.

TRAINING TO ENLIGHTEN AND EMPOWER

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**¶3.** (SBU) Each trainee received a comprehensive, 92-page training manual, intended not only to enlighten but to empower. It contains

an endorsement from GEC Chairman B. Battulga, in a gesture aimed at increasing the observers' legitimacy and authority. It also contains excerpts of the Election Law, highlighted in special text boxes, and a variety of helpful appendices and forms. One such form is intended to facilitate the observation of vote-counting; another pertains to procedures related to mobile ballot boxes. IRI Mongolia hopes many of the election observers who undergo the training will return to their home provinces with extra copies of the manual and share them with other observers.

1,000 PARTICIPANTS EXPECTED

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14. (SBU) IRI Mongolia estimates that roughly 1,000 people will attend one of its day-long sessions. The IRI Mongolia Director said funding shortages prevented the NGO from holding sessions for observers affiliated with parties other than the MPRP and DP. Sixteen of the 19 planned training sessions are to be held at provincial locales, with the remaining three in the capital, UB. The UB training sessions are expected to draw between 50 and 70 participants each.

MULTI-MEMBER ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

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15. (SBU) The IRI Mongolia Director (protect), an American citizen, expressed concern over Mongolia's departure from single-member electoral districts to multiple-member districts. In the last Parliamentary elections, there were 76 electoral districts, and in each one, voters cast ballots for a single candidate. However,

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there are now 20 districts, and most voters will be selecting two, three or four candidates, depending on the size of their district. The Director said this change would favor incumbents, who have better name recognition (and in many cases, more money for advertising). The Director also said that frequent amendments to the Election Law have made it necessary for Mongolian authorities to re-educate the populace and observers on rules and procedures for the election.

16. (SBU) The GEC has yet to make a number of important decisions related to the upcoming elections, including where ballots will be counted, and how mobile ballot boxes will work.

17. (SBU) Mongolia's Foreign Ministry (refs A and B) confirmed to Post on May 13 that Mongolia will welcome officials from the Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership to observe the June 29 elections, adding that the formal invitations will be extended by the GEC.

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